

## **BEP- Patient information**

BEP is given to patients with testicular cancer. BEP consists of the following: Bleomycin, Etoposide and Cisplatin. One cycle is given over five days; in addition you will receive Bleomycin after 2 weeks (Day 15). This is repeated every 3 weeks. The number of cycles of BEP is prescribed individually. You will have a routine blood test before the start of each cycle of treatment.

### **How to prepare**

You should take the anti-sickness drugs as prescribed. We recommend a normal breakfast on the day of chemotherapy.

### **How is it given?**

BEP is given as a drip into a cannula (a small tube inserted into a vein in the arm or the back of the hand). Treatment lasts five to six hours a day. Bleomycin on Day 15 is given over 30 minutes.

### **Possible side effects**

BEP-chemotherapy can cause several different side effects. Some are more likely to occur than others. Not everyone gets all the side effects. Most side effects are usually temporary, but in some rare cases they can be life-threatening. It is important to tell your hospital doctor or nurse about any side effects so they can be monitored and, where possible, treated.

### **Nausea and vomiting (sickness)**

BEP-chemotherapy can cause nausea, but this can usually be prevented with powerful modern anti-sickness drugs. Therefore, you should take the anti-sickness drugs as prescribed. The doctor will also prescribe anti-sickness drugs you should take if you experience any nausea. Should you still have nausea or vomiting, you must let your “fastlege” or local hospital know, because your anti-sickness drugs may need to be changed or increased.

### **Kidney function**

BEP chemotherapy can affect your kidneys. You must drink 2-3 liters daily on the days you receive chemotherapy. To monitor that you drink enough, you must measure and write down how much you drink. Additionally, you will receive fluids intravenously. To monitor that your kidneys are working

while you are having treatment, you are weighed every morning and for some patients the amount of urine is measured. If the amount of urine is insufficient, you will receive a diuretic drug.

### Fever

Bleomycin can cause fever within 24 hours. You should take paracetamol which reduces your temperature, as prescribed. If you have a fever above 38,3°C, you must contact your local hospital.

### Bone marrow

Chemotherapy can cause a lower blood cell production in the bone marrow. This effect can begin seven days after treatment has been started, usually reaches its lowest point 10-15 days after start of chemotherapy, before increasing steadily and returning to normal levels.

Due to lower number of white blood cells, you are vulnerable to infection. Any infection following chemotherapy is potentially serious and must be treated immediately.

Due to lower number of blood platelets, you are at risk of bleeding (nose bleed, skin bleed). Due to lower number of red blood cells, you are at risk for anemia. Anemia may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. You may need a blood transfusion.

**If you have any of the following symptoms, immediately contact your local hospital:**

- Feel unwell and / or symptoms of infection (shivering, feeling hot and cold, sweats, sore throat, cough/cold/breathlessness, pain or difficulty when passing urine, diarrhea )
- A temperature above 38.4 °C once or a temperature above 37.9°C for more than one hour. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer so you can check your rectal temperature. You can buy one from your local pharmacy ("apotek").
- Nose- or skin bleeding (bloodspots or rashes on the skin), unexplained bruising, or bleeding gums

Try to live as normal a life as possible, with normal personal and family relationships. If possible, avoid contact with persons with infection, for instance a cold.

For three months following chemotherapy, you should avoid treatment with aminoglycoside antibiotics. In case you need antibiotics, you must tell the doctor that you have received chemotherapy (cisplatin).

To stimulate your immune system to fight off infections, you should take an injection with pegfilgrastim following chemotherapy.

### Lung function

Bleomycin may cause changes to your lung tissue. **Please report any cough or breathlessness to your local hospital without delay.** Please inform your doctor on your next hospital visit.

### Constipation

Constipation may occur. You can prevent constipation by drinking 2-3 liters per day, high-fiber diet and be physically active. You can buy mild laxatives at the pharmacy (“apotek”) without a prescription, for instance Duphalac / Laktulose / Movicol. If needed, you can add Laxoberal.

### Diarrhea

Diarrhea may become a problem while you are having treatment. **If you develop severe diarrhea it is important to contact your local hospital straightaway as this may be a sign of a serious infection. Don't delay!**

### Lethargy /tiredness

You may feel tired and lacking in energy. The tiredness is most noticeable the first week after chemotherapy. It is important to find a balance between activity and rest. Allow yourself to rest more than usual. We recommend you exercise as you feel fit. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial. Some patients experience reduced memory and ability to concentrate. For most patients this normalizes after a while.

### Tinnitus & high frequency hearing loss

You may develop tinnitus (ringing in the ears), this sensation should subside when your treatment finishes. Please tell your doctor if this occurs. High frequency hearing loss can also occur with this chemotherapy, this may be permanent.

### Tingling & numbness in the fingers or toes

This is usually mild and temporary but sometimes lasts for some time or may become permanent. Please report these symptoms to your doctor on your next hospital visit.

### Hair loss

Hair loss is usually total. The hair falls out gradually 10 to 14 days following your first course of treatment. Please remember that this is a temporary side effect and your hair will grow back when your treatment is completed. Ask the staff for “Parykkrekvisisjon” if you would like a wig.

### Skin changes

Chemotherapy can make your skin more sensitive to the sun than usual. Sit in the shade, avoid too much sun and use a high factor sunblock cream. Asian and African-Caribbean people may develop noticeable light patches on their skin.

### Sore mouth

Your mouth may become sore or dry, or you may notice small mouth ulcers during this treatment. Drinking plenty of fluids and cleaning your teeth regularly and gently with a soft toothbrush can help to reduce the risk of this happening.

### Strange taste

Occasionally during treatment you may experience a strange taste, sometimes described as metallic or bitter. A strongly flavoured sweet or mint will help to disguise this.

### Sex, contraception & fertility

Protecting your partner: We recommend that you use a condom during sexual intercourse while you are having chemotherapy and the following 2 days. This will protect your partner from any chemotherapy drugs that may be present in semen.

Fertility: It is not advisable to father a child whilst having chemotherapy, as the developing fetus may be harmed. It is necessary to use effective contraception until one year after end of chemotherapy. This chemotherapy may affect your ability to have children. We therefore advice men, who in the future want to father a child, to deposit sperm in the sperm bank before start of chemotherapy.

### Allergic reactions

In rare cases, patients experience allergic reactions while receiving chemotherapy. Symptoms include hot flushes, rashes, itching, and breathlessness. The nurse will start treatment and contact a doctor.